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ABSTRACT

The focus of this issue of the "Ohio Reading Teacher," a journal dedicated to the improvement of reading instruction, is vocabulary development. Feature articles include "Helping Children Find the Words," "Webbing Words--Weaving Connections," and "Syllabication." Other articles provide a list of publishers of basal readers, a discussion of children's literature that can be used for vocabulary building, a description of the Ohio Young Authors' Program, a description of reading/study skills peer training, and reading strategies for vocational teachers. (RL)

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OHIO
READING TEACHER

[VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT]

Ohio Council
International Reading Association

Dedicated to the Improvement of
Reading Instruction

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Volume XIV, Number 2 January, 1980

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Volume XIV, Number 2 **OHIO READING TEACHER** January, 1980

Contents

Editorial
James E. Kerber 2
The President Communicates
Gaye Laurell Wolfe 3
Feature Section
Language Arts: Sharon Fox
"Helping Children Find the Words"
Janet Hickman 4
"Webbing Words-Weaving Connections"
Nancy Platt 7
Research in Reading: Robert L. Hillerich
"Syllabication" 12
Classroom Materials:
"Who Publishes Basal Readers?" Alden J. Moe 15
Council News: Margaret Bobzien 16
Children's Literature: Mary Lou White
"Fiddling With Fancy Words: Books for Vocabulary Building" 19
Specials' Section
"A Young Authors' Program" Rosalyn Dowling 22
A "Challenge" Article
"—But Are They Reading?" Susan J. Daniels 25
"Reading and Study Skills Peer Training," Dick Shelton 26
Vocational Reading:
"Reading Strategies for Vocational Teachers," (Part I), Judy Walter 29

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Editorial

This is a renewed (October 1978 O.R.T.) plea for all of us to examine the skills on which teachers and readers spend so much "reading" classroom time. My plea is that if we have to teach as though reading is a collection of subskills, then let's try to discover the skills that **really** effect and affect reading. Every skill that we include in our developmental reading program should be;

(1) observable as **new reading behavior**, such as readers indicating that they know that not all the signals of oral language (stress, pitch, etc.) are available in print, but that there are substitute signals in written language (italics, underlining, punctuation, etc.) that can help convey printed meanings,

(2) modifiable **attitudes toward reading**, such as recognizing that print represents "meanings" just as verbal language does,

(3) increased **understandings**, such as really knowing what is meant by the terms "word, beginning, ending, etc." and then how these concepts appear in print.

The key point (in case I've missed explaining it) is that we must be continually identifying and teaching skills that make a true difference in helping readers see that all language (verbal, print, body movement) is intended to do just **one** thing; communicate meaning to other people! Let's begin insisting that these are the kinds of skills for which teachers are (1) willing to be held accountable, (2) willing to help students strive toward levels of so-called mastery, and (3) willing to prescribe for every reader!

A **Welcome** to Joan Corless, Curriculum Coordinator for the Montgomery County Schools as our new Contributing Editor for Reading in the Content Areas. A **Thanks** to Al Ciani for all his past contributions as the Content Area Editor, and our best wishes to him as our O.C.I.R.A. Vice President Elect.

J.E.K.

GAYE LAURELL WOLFE

Professional Responsibilities

Have you thought recently about your professional responsibilities as an educator interested in reading? As we start into this new year and new decade, perhaps now is a good time to think about our responsibilities. The following list is provided to help.

Reading professionals:*

1. seek out promising educational practices and relevant research findings and share with others
2. continue to grow professionally by:
   a. attending professional meetings
   b. actively participating in professional organizations
   c. reading professional journals and other sources of information
   d. keeping abreast of changes in the profession and showing a willingness to accept those which have proved to be effective
3. attempt to ascertain, through formal and/or informal means, the individual needs of students within their classes
4. administer and interpret formal and informal tests only after a full consideration of their particular limitations and potential values
5. prescribe suitable individual or group instruction, using relevant materials
6. work to combat forces of censorship which would restrict the materials a professional might select as educationally sound or appropriate
7. interpret to the community the nature and activity of the reading program, presenting its weaknesses as well as its strengths. It is unethical to present only favorable information.
8. hold the right, and in many cases the obligation, to express an opinion about the wisdom or justice of a given law affecting education generally and/or reading specifically
9. are willing to undetake and complete a variety of volunteer professional activities - not limiting services to only those situations which are prestige-enhancing
10. do not claim or advertise affiliation with the International Reading Association as evidence of competence in reading

*(Adapted from the Code of Ethics of the College Reading Association.)

LANGUAGE ARTS

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Helping Children Find The Words

"What is a cannon?" asked one first grade teacher as she finished reading *Drummer Hoff*,[1] a picture book which has as its text the traditional rhyme describing the assembly of such a weapon. Several children attempted a definition, but were evidently frustrated by lack of key vocabulary. Finally one boy said, "I'll *be* the cannon. Someone hold up my feet!" Other children quickly took up this strategy, making him the cannon barrel and adding themselves as other pieces of equipment. Together they modeled with their bodies a "cannon" to match the illustration in the book they had shared.

In the study[2] from which this example is drawn, young children often resorted to a demonstration of meaning when words failed them. The teacher, alert for ways to facilitate their language fluency, sometimes asked them to *show* her the answer to a question before they tried to *tell* her, since acting out a meaning seemed to help them find the words to talk about it afterward. Frank Smith has suggested that every use of language may depend upon a non-language alternative, and that children perhaps must have the alternative form before the language itself: "The way to promote in children the difficult representational or descriptive function of language, for example, might lie in the simultaneous or even prior encouragement of alternative forms of representation, such as drawing, model building, or play generally."[3] Giving children an opportunity to make a picture or a diorama or to act out a part of a book, then, may be a step toward helping them talk *about* that book.

How else can teachers show that they are attuned to children's language as they work with literature? One way is by recognizing that there will be legitimate differences among children of various age levels as they discuss the same feature of a story. Theme, for instance, may be expressed in a generalized way by upper elementary students, while younger ones are more likely to identify the story's "lesson" in particular terms, tied to the events and characters of that one story.

*Winner of the 1979 Ohioana Library Association's Award for her book *Zoar Blue* (Macmillan 1978), and author of two other historical novels for young readers (*Valley of the Shadows* and *The Stones*).

In the book *The Magical Drawings of Moony B. Finch*[4], a little boy who loves to draw is given a box of crayons and thereafter practices his artwork so much that he becomes marvelously skilled. As a matter of fact, when his drawings are touched, they slip off the paper and become real, causing a great hue and cry and commotion by those who want Moony to draw pictures that will make them rich. Although the boy eventually finds a way to escape the clamor, it means that he must keep his magical talents to himself.

When asked to discuss the "big idea" of this story, children at different age levels expressed it in different ways. To the question, "What lesson does Moony Finch learn in this story?", some ten-year-olds gave answers that indicated their recognition of the general applicability of Moony's experience:

"Well, he learned people were selfish."
"You can't do everything for everybody."
"You shouldn't give everything to people that they want 'cause they'll always want more."

Most six- and seven-year-olds, on the other hand, like a few of the older children, took the question about what Moony learned very literally. "He learned to draw" was a common answer. When the questioner's intent was clarified—"Did Moony learn anything about people? Will he keep on drawing pictures for people who want them?"—two of the younger children said "He learned to never draw like that again, because all them people would say I want *this*, I want *that*!", and "He shouldn't go out and do sorts of stuff like that because it might happen again."

Although the younger children's original answers would seem to indicate a lesser understanding, the extra questions show that this is not quite the case. The younger children's difficulty arises not in getting the point of the story, but in expressing that point in terms that will take it *beyond* that particular text. In her book *Children's Minds*,[5] Donaldson uses the term "disembedded" to refer to the sort of language and thinking that formalizes meaning, and she identifies this as crucially important to higher learning tasks. The transition from the context-tied "all them people would say I want *this*, I want *that*!" to the generalized "you can't do everything for everybody" is an important one. Teachers may facilitate growth toward making generalizations by helping children become more aware of their own choice of words.

Donaldson also comments about the teacher's choice of words, saying that what might look like a child's failure to understand an adult may, in fact, reflect the adult's failure to recognize the ambiguities in his or her own language when heard with the child's inexperienced ear. "What lesson does Moony Finch learn in this story?" may indicate, to the questioner, a routine request for a theme statement. But the child's expectations are more concrete, and "lessons" may well mean learning to *do* something, such as drawing good pictures. Teachers' questions about stories, then, ought to be very carefully phrased, and expanded or explained as necessary.

The discussion of a story does imply a certain amount of special vocabulary, and teachers can help children find the right words by introducing those words in an appropriate context. One fourth and fifth grade teacher added the term "transformational tale" to her students' discussion vocabulary by reading aloud a series of such stories and encouraging the children to identify the changes which affected the characters. After they had been through several examples and heard the teacher's repeated references to "transformations," some children began to use the word in their own comments. Notably, they were never required to write a definition of the word, nor were they ever tested on its meaning; they learned the term as it became useful to them. Likewise, a primary teacher called attention to the occurrence of refrains and repetition in the nursery tales and Mother Goose rhymes she read aloud to her group; frequently, thereafter, children would consider a story and comment, "I like the way it keeps repeating," or "It's got a refrain."

Talking about books is such a common classroom activity, and perhaps so closely associated with comprehension tasks, that it may be overlooked as a source of information about children's language capabilities. But in helping readers find the words to say what they mean about a story, teachers can help them develop language in several ways: to grow in the representational function of language, to move toward the ability to generalize or make "disembedded" statements, and to establish a base of simple terminology useful for the discussion of literature.

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REMINDER

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8

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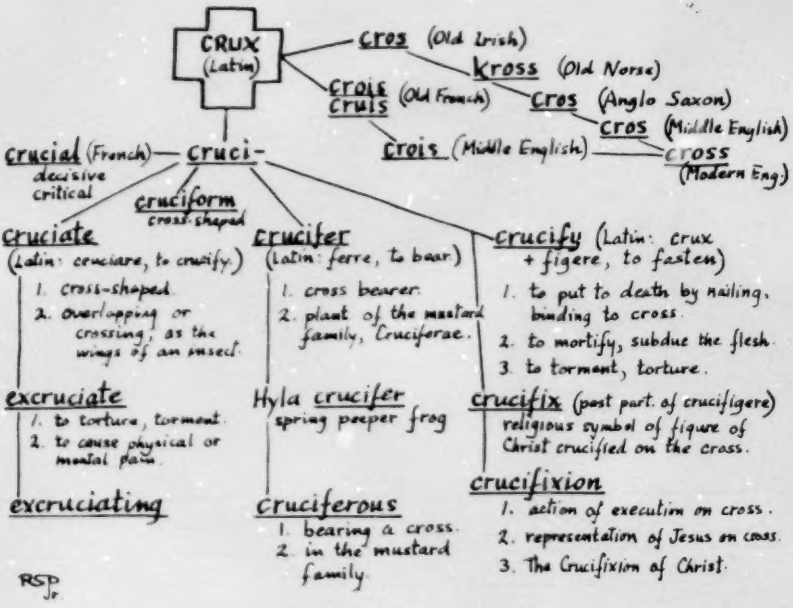
Webbing Words—Weaving Connections

Several years ago, a group of college students visited a modern church to study the design and furnishings of the building. Of special interest was a large, multicolored cross suspended about the chancel. Back in the classroom, the word "cross" became the focus of this word web:


CRUX (Latin)
cros (Old Irish)
kross (Old Norse)
cros (Anglo Saxon)
cros (Middle English)
cross (Modern Eng.)
crois (Old French)
cruis
crois (Middle English)
cruci-
crucial (French) decisive critical
cruciform cross-shaped
cruciate (Latin: cruciare, to crucify)
1. cross-shaped.
2. overlapping or crossing, as the wings of an insect.
excruciate
1. to torture, torment.
2. to cause physical or mental pain.
excruciating
crucifer (Latin: ferre, to bear)
1. cross bearer.
2. plant of the mustard family, Cruciferae.
Hyla crucifer spring peeper frog
cruciferous
1. bearing a cross.
2. in the mustard family.
crucify (Latin: crux + figere, to fasten)
1. to put to death by nailing, binding to cross.
2. to mortify, subdue the flesh.
3. to torment, torture.
crucifix (past part. of crucifigere) religious symbol of figure of Christ crucified on the cross.
crucifixion
1. action of executing on cross.
2. representation of Jesus on cross.
3. The Crucifixion of Christ.
RSP Jr.

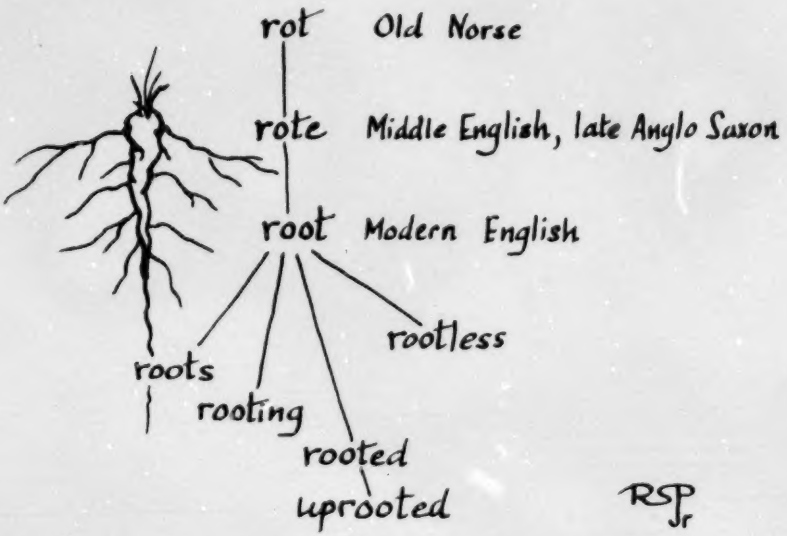
(figure 1)

The students who developed this web had made connections. They had identified the stem *cruci-* from *crux* and *cross*. They reached back in time to find its historical origins and looked for living relatives or cognates. These were arranged in relation to each other. The students defined these words, noting that some meanings were literal; others, metaphorical. *Cruciform* literally was cross-shaped; *crucial*, a crossroads kind of decision.

In this work, these advanced students drew on their own knowledge of words, and on their skill in using a dictionary. They worked independently, hypothesizing and checking connections, engrossed in their own explorations.

Which experiences might have lead up to this rather complex web? What kind of webbing experiences are appropriate for children in elementary school?

Looking in on a primary class, we might see a teacher and children talking together about the word *root*. Perhaps a large carrot from home has just been shared, perhaps there are seedlings on the window ledge, or perhaps *root* is a word in this week's spelling list. The teacher is taking this opportunity to help these young children become aware of connections. What words do they know which have *root* in them? The teacher records their suggestions on the board or on large chart paper. More words are added, and meanings are discussed and recorded until the web looks like this:

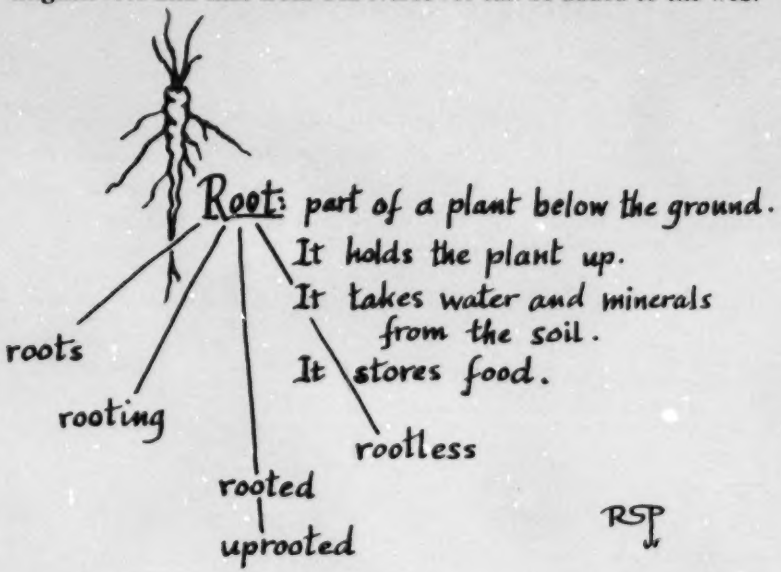


(figure 2)

A large, permanent copy can be made of this root web, and used to bring about activities which lead to language analysis—word play, word games, talk about words. What other words end like *rootless? helpless? friendless? hairless?* What does *-less* do to the meaning of these words?

By now, if given such experiences, children probably look at the word *root* itself with new awareness. They can be encouraged to wonder about its origins in history. What word did people use long ago for our word *root*? Several children can explore these origins in a dictionary which contains etymological information, and report to the

class. Their report that root comes from late Anglo-Saxon and Middle English *rote* and that from Old Norse *rot* can be added to the web:



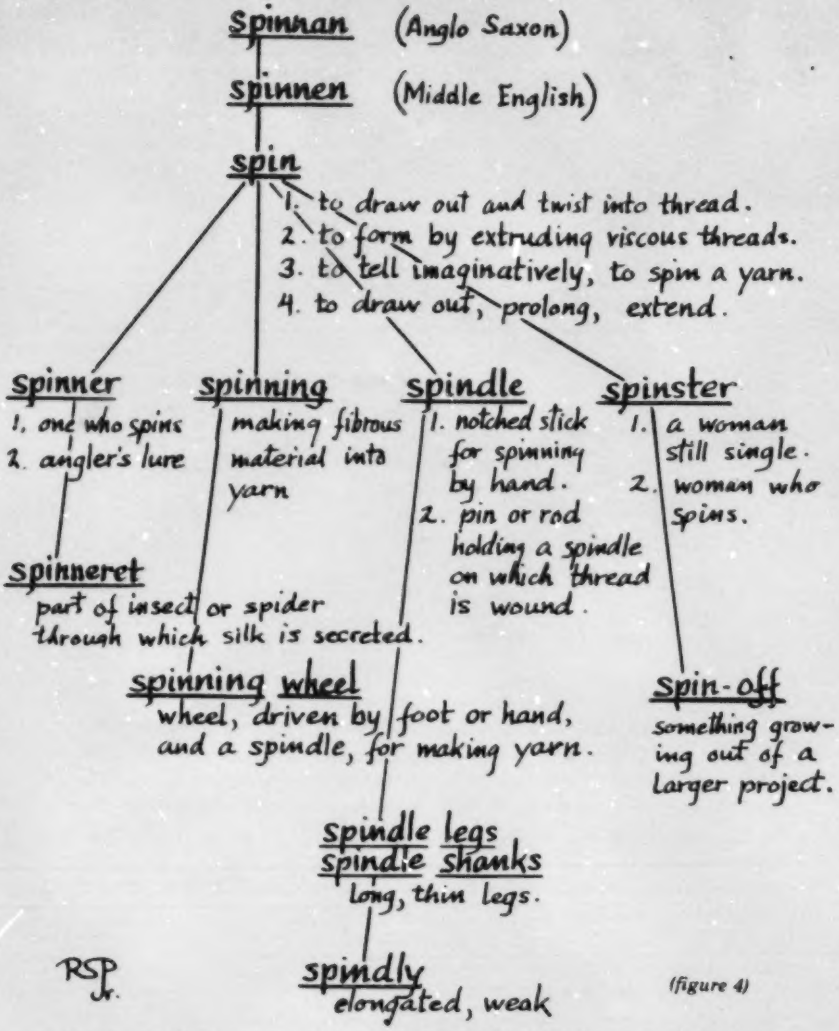
(figure 3)

Children can also decide which definitions or meanings are literal, and which metaphoric. They can recall tales in which the hero stood *rooted* to the spot. They can discuss the meaning of the name of the TV novel *Roots*. They may understand the *uprooted* feelings of someone who has to move to a new house and school. In this way, youngsters begin to build an awareness of metaphor.

In the upper elementary grades, children can web more independently, building on their earlier experiences. Words to explore through webbing still come from many sources; from social studies or science topics, from field trips, from literature, from a list of words related to a study generated by the class with its teacher. Children can take more responsibility for finding and choosing their own words. For example, out of a study of pioneer life may come the word *spin*.

Upper grade children working alone or in pairs, on the board or using scratch paper, can make a rough web of words they think may be related, then, using a dictionary, they can check their web to see if these words do really belong together. For instance, is *spin* a cognate of *spine?* of a *spinet piano?* (They will discover that it is not.)

Children can choose and paraphrase dictionary definitions, and then enter these on their web. (The amount of information in dictionaries large enough to contain etymological information may be overwhelming, even for oldest elementary school children, so that teachers may have to help children select paraphrase.) Again, the more


Spinnan (Anglo Saxon)
Spinnen (Middle English)
spin
1. to draw out and twist into thread.
2. to form by extruding viscous threads.
3. to tell imaginatively, to spin a yarn.
4. to draw out, prolong, extend.
spinner
1. one who spins
2. angler's lure
spinning
making fibrous material into yarn
spindle
1. notched stick for spinning by hand.
2. pin or rod holding a spindle on which thread is wound.
spinster
1. a woman still single.
2. woman who spins.
spinneret
part of insect or spider through which silk is secreted.
spinning wheel
wheel, driven by foot or hand, and a spindle, for making yarn.
spin-off
something growing out of a larger project.
spindle legs
spindle shanks
long, thin legs.
RSP Jr.
spindly
elongated, weak

(figure 4)

metaphorical meanings can be compared with the more literal. *Spinning* can be specific and concrete, as a spindle in the hand or on a wheel. Or, it can be a drawing out in the imagination, a spinning of a tale or yarn.

A large, final copy can be made by the children themselves, and then shared with others. Children can refer to these displayed webs as sources of vocabulary or spellings to use in their writing. The webs can also be used for word analysis and study. For instance, what does an *er* or an *or* at the end of a word usually mean, as in spinst*er*, dancer, reader, doct*or*, dictat*or*? Why do some words have a double *n*—spi*nn*ing, spi*nn*er—while others only have one—spinster, spindle?

VALUES OF WORD WEBBING

What can children gain from word webbing? First, and most generally, word webbing is one of a number of ways in which children come to a conscious understanding of the language they use, for the most part, unconsciously. Without destroying the impact of experience, without lessening the amount of language practice through use, they can gradually come to more objective knowledge and control of their own language processes.

Further, they develop a feeling for such abstractions as "language change" as they see how both meanings and forms shift over time, for instance, how old English *blaefdige*, kneader of bread, has become our word *lady*.[3] They see, without needing to undertake foreign language study, that English has a complex ancestry, and, even more broadly, that our lives as well as our language are bound to the past.

Children also have first hand acquaintance with metaphor, as a "carrying over" of concrete meanings of one word to another. The pain of the Crucifixion appears in *excruciating*. People torn out of their own home settings are indeed *uprooted*. *Spun out* well describes a prolonged event. Such concrete analogies give our language vividness and power. Even young children can begin to appreciate this.

Next, webbing helps expand vocabulary. Focused word study through webbing can follow use of new words in the context of an experience. In this way, these new words can be learned or "filed" in relation to words already known, and so can be more available for future use.

Finally, webbing may help children's reading and spelling. Words which are alike in appearance, though different in sound, are related semantically. The child who sees the ties between *finite*, *definite*, and *infinite*, is helped to understand these related meanings, and is more likely to spell these words correctly. The college student who wrote "*definately*" had never considered these relationships. Word webbing, based on meaning rather than sound, can give practice in finding these "underlying lexical relationships" which reflect semantic connections.[1]

Word webbing, then, is justifiable on many grounds. It is also a form of language play and as such gives children of all ages valuable practice in getting to know their own language through a close, inside look.

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Syllabication

"My pupils have the other skills and can read at a higher level, but I can't move them up because they can't pass the mastery test dealing with syllable division."

Similar statements are heard so frequently that it is about time we turn from asking what's wrong with the kids to asking what's wrong with the expectation. Is there any value in teaching rules for syllable division?

Let's examine the question from three views: the nature of language, the "truth" of the rules, and the effect of teaching them on children's reading skill.

NATURE OF THE LANGUAGE

Larger words are pronounced—and may be written— in parts called syllables. However, in English we have at least three *different* ways of dividing words into syllables. Taking the relatively simple word *yellowed*, we might break it into syllables by using (1) the "visual" or writing syllabication, dividing as shown in the dictionary entry word between the *l*'s *(yel/lowed)*; (2) the speech syllabication, since reading involves conversion—mentally or actually—from print to speech, using the pronunciation syllabication after the *l*'s *(yel/ōd)*; or (3) the morphological or meaning division, recognizing the root word and separating the suffix from the root *(yellow/ed)*.

In the literature on syllabication, most debate relates to the first two approaches, yet—if we believe that reading involves getting at meaning—we ought to be more concerned about the third point. How could anyone hope to improve reading skill by dividing *bombard* according to the visual or speech divisions *(bom/bard)*, thereby obliterating the root or meaning entity *bomb*?

The writing (entry word) syllabication is arbitrary and based more on visual aesthetics than on reality. Syllables exist as bursts of speech and can be identified by their vowel peaks; however their consonant boundaries are very vague. To put it more bluntly, as an experienced teacher and mature user of English, where do you *hear* the division of *water*? As one linguist put it, the division is about in the middle of the *t*!"

Once you've decided which syllable division to use, the dictionary will provide "the answers." The only difficulty is, you'll get *different* answers from different dictionaries. Do you hear Thorndike-Barnhart's *(moun/tən)* or Webster's *(mount/n)*, *(man/tl)* or *(mant/l)*?

"TRUTH" OF THE RULES

Basal readers usually provide rules about syllable division based on the visual or entry word division, the convention used in writing. Clymer examined four major basal reading programs at the primary level and found only five syllable rules agreed upon.[5] He tested these rules against the words used in those programs to find how many of the rules were true 75% or more of the time. Bailey tested the same rules against words in reading programs through grade 6 with essentially the same results, as shown below:[1]

Rule		Clymer	Bailey
#38	If the first vowel in a word is followed by two consonants, the first syllable usually ends with the first of the two consonants. (VC/CV)	72%	78%
#39	If the first vowel sound in a word is followed by a single consonant, that consonant usually begins the second syllable. (V/CV)	44%	50%
#40	If the last syllable of a word ends in *le*, the consonant preceding the *le* usually begins the last syllable.	97%	93%
#41	When the first vowel element in a word is followed by *th*, *ch*, or *sh*, these symbols are not broken when the word is divided into syllables and may go with either the first or second syllable.	100%	100%
#42	In a word of more than one syllable, the letter *v* usually goes with the preceding vowel to form a syllable.	73%	65%

Of the two rules Clymer found to be true 75% of the time, the best (#41) doesn't help anyone decide *where* to divide the word. The other (#40) is based on the writing convention and distracts from meaning in words such as *han/dle (hand), spar/kle (spark), or twin/kle (twink).*

Burmeister reported a total of three structural rules, of which two exceeded 75% utility: (1) divide between a prefix and a root, and (2) divide between two roots.[2] Both were true 95% of the time and *may* be helpful if not for a problem to be discussed later.

Of course, we might list a lot of rules that are true but of no help. That seems to be a more frequent policy than Clymer's study would suggest, and it brings us to the final point: How effective are the rules in helping children to read?

EFFECTIVENESS WITH CHILDREN

Costigan "validated" twenty-three syllable rules and found most of them to be true 90-100% of the time.[6] In fact, six were true 100% of the time. On the other hand, what help is it to know rules such as "Two vowels together with separate sounds form separate syllables *(ar/e/a)*"? The reader must know the word *before* the rule can be applied!

Canney assessed the effectiveness of teaching four syllable rules to 108 second grade pupils.[3] After ten 25-minute lessons, he found these pupils did not improve over the control group in either word attack skills or comprehension.

In a follow-up study, Canney found the rules were ineffective regardless of whether the words were or were not in the pupils' oral vocabulary.[4]

Marzano *et al* did a correlation between gain scores in syllabication and reading comprehension to discover if there was any relation-

ship.[8] Using the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test with middle grade students, they found a correlation of .13, indicating that only 2% of the variance in comprehension gain could be predicted by gain in syllabication. Of course, even that very low correlation cannot be taken to imply a cause-effect relationship between the two.

Spache and Baggett tested teachers and found that those who teach the rules scored significantly higher on a test of syllabication.[9] However, even those who knew the rules tended not to apply them.

Finally, even without the research, a little common sense should tell us that such a commonly taught rule as the VCV is worthless for children: Again, they must know the word before they can use the rule. For example, divide *panat.* If it's pronounced *(pā/nat)* you probably divide before the *n*; if it's *(pan/ət),* after the *n.* Unless you already know how to pronounce the word, the rule is useless. And if you know how to pronounce the word, why would you want to waste time applying the rule?

Added to this is the confusion between entry word division and pronunciation, where we divide *train/ing* but may pronounce *trā/ning.*

In conclusion, there seems little justification for using "reading time" to teach children rules about the specific point of syllable division. It is probably helpful for them to know that longer words can be broken into parts ("syllables") for pronunciation and that compound words are often made up of known words. Further than this, teacher beware. Even the apparently good rule to divide a prefix and a root—which Burmeister found true 95% of the time—may be a booby trap for children. It works well if the child knows the word is prefixed *(pre/amble, pre/empt),* but what if the word isn't already recognized? Then we might have *pre/ach.* Gibson found ten times more such anomalous prefixes as compared to true prefixes.[7]

Wardhaugh once wrote that "Syllabication has not 'truth' value."[10] This writer would delete *truth* from the statement.

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CLASSROOM MATERIALS

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Who Publishes Basal Readers?

Despite dozens of instructional approaches to the teaching of reading and at least an equal number of publishers, the basal reader program is the most common approach to reading instruction.[1,3] Furthermore, basal readers are "used in an estimated 80 to 95 percent of American Schools."[3] Therefore, it is a responsibility of all teachers of reading to become familiar with the basal readers currently available.

At present, there are twenty-seven basal reader series marketed and most of these series are available as total elementary (K-6) programs, although several were developed just for primary-level instruction. The current publishers of complete elementary (K-6 or K-8) basal reader series and the names of their most recent editions are as follows:

Allyn & Bacon, Inc.
Pathfinder:
Allyn and Bacon Reading Program (1978)

American Book Company
American Book Reading Program (1977)

The Economy Company
Keys to Reading (1975)

Ginn and Company
Reading 360 (1969-73)
Reading 720 (1976)

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
The Bookmark Reading Program:
Second Edition (1974)

Harper & Row, Publishers
Reading Basics Plus (1976-77)

Holt, Rinehart and Winston
The Holt Basic Reading System (1977)

Houghton Mifflin Company
Houghton Mifflin Reading Series (1976)

Laidlaw Brothers
The Laidlaw Reading Program (1977)

J. B. Lippincott Company
Basic Reading Series (1975)

Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc.
The Macmillan Reading Program (1967-74)
Series r:
The New Macmillan Reading Program (1975)

Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company
Merrill Linguistic Reading Program (1975)

Open Court Publishing Company
Open Court Basic Readers (1976)
The Headway Program:
Basic Reading and Language Skills (1979)

Rand McNally & Company
Young America Basic Series (1978)

Science Research Associates, Inc.
The Basic Reading Series (1976), K-2
The Comprehensive Reading Series (1971), for 3-6

Scott, Foresman and Company
Basic in Reading (1978)
The New Open Highways Program (1973-74)
Reading Unlimited (1976)

There are also several publishers which market basal readers just for the primary grades and their materials are essentially viewed as beginning reading materials. Those programs are as follows:

Crane Publishing Company
Crane Reading System (1977)

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
The Palo Alto Reading Program:
Sequential Steps in Reading,
Second Edition (1973)

Macmillan Publishing Company
The Bank Street Readers (1967-74)

McGraw-Hill Book Company/Webster Division
Programmed Reading: Third Edition (1973)

Science Research Associates, Inc.
Distar Reading I, II, III,
Second Edition (1972-76)

In the early 1980's almost every publisher listed above will have a new basal series available. And since we are entering a new decade most of the new series will reflect major revisions over previous editions.

Should you find yourself in the position of having to evaluate or choose a basal series, the task should be done systematically. A basal evaluation checklist should be used.

The first step, however, is to establish *in writing* a district-wide philosophy which will guide the development of your instructional program. The instructional program established will then determine the nature of the materials—published and unpublished—which should be used for classroom reading instruction. The program (which reflects the district philosophy) should dictate the nature of the instructional materials. The instructional materials should *not* dictate or determine the reading program.

Based on the prevailing instructional practices in reading, basal readers will undoubtedly continue to be a major part of classroom instruction. Identify the publishers. Evaluate carefully. Select judiciously.

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COUNCIL NEWS

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR AND WRITER: MARGARET BOBZIEN CHILLICOTHE, OHIO

Your organization chairperson and committee of Field Representatives as well as our National and State Staff are vitally concerned with council growth. Our state committee is charged with stimulating the organization of new councils, assisting with program planning, as well as extending help and involving parents in council meetings.

I have shared with you some suggestions on promoting and maintaining memberships. Since then, sessions were held at the International Convention in Atlanta and with the Metro Atlanta Council. I wish all of you might have shared these experiences with me.

Metro Atlanta Council serves an area of fifty miles. The council publishes four news letters per year always highlighting some of their

local members with their photographs and or a write-up of their accomplishments. I was pleased to note that many of our councils are also using some of these unique techniques to improve membership. I'm sure much dedication is needed at the local level. I hope you do not feel "over committed", but let us all work to increase our membership at all three levels; National, State, and Local.

Again I would like to thank Kay Hayes for her council programs and activities. The Thompson Council in Colorado offered these five suggestions:

1. Poll all teachers to find leadership strengths and interests.
2. Hold a planning meeting each summer.
3. Announce all meetings for the year before the first meeting.
4. Give a book to the school with the highest council membership.
5. Arrange for college or pay scale credit for attending council meetings.
6. Honor three administrators a year with council memberships.
7. Place several elementary and secondary administrators on the board each year.

Euclid Council for the second year, deserves special mention for their unique program. We have Dolores Black, President and Doris Hasse, President-elect to thank.

Their program is printed in the form of a large ticket, listing six performances or Acts I-VI; total number of meetings. A minimal fee will be charged to nonmembers who wish to take the in-service credit, to help defray expenses. Watch for their meeting dates. Hopefully you can attend.

Their first Act was held with Dr. Stephen Dunning, University of Michigan heading a workshop on "Language Plays—Coping with Dialect."

Act II, with an evening "As You Like It" at Lakeland Community College—National Shakespeare Company.

Act III, "Much Ado About Something." Reading. Preparing for the Right to Read Week. How to help yourself and the kids get on the right track. Ohio Council President, Gaye Wolfe is presenting the program on February 21.

Backward Glance: Fall Council Meetings. Please note the speakers who may help your council!

Akron - Dean Caessar Carrino, Dr. Hal Foster, Dr. Ruth Roberts and Mrs. Esther Owens in a "Reading Round Up."

Allen County - Florence Sharp speaker. Topic, "Bucket Brigade."

Appalachian - Peg Will speaker. Topic: "Newspapers, The Total Curriculum." Windsor Chacey - "Independent Reading: The Self Fulfillment Tool." Ann Hoy - topic: "Poetry, the Neglected Language Tool."

Ashtabula County - Dr. Judith Green, Kent State University, Topic: "Children as Authors of Library Books." Dr. Emmaline Henriksen, Kent State, Topic: "Comprehension."

Crawford County - Second Meeting. Movie - "Reading Skills."

Cuyahoga Summit - Mimi Sobel, speaker on "Reading Games and Materials." Beverly Hertel, North Royalton, "Reading is Fun in the Resource Center."

Greater Columbus - Met October 9.

Heritage - Florence Sharp, L. D. Consultant. Topic: "Bucket Brigade - a tutorial program."

Land of Legend - Thea Cramer, Topic: "Language Experience." Peg Will, speaker on "The Newspaper and Comprehension."

Mahoning Valley - Stephen Dunning conducted a lively language play workshop. John Robins, host and creator of the popular "Cover to Cover" instructional series, appeared in person. At the third meeting, the Council celebrated the International Year of the Child by choosing a variety of presentations supporting reading in their community.

Marion County - Make and Take it Workshop at their first meeting, November 29. Albert May had as his topic "The International Year of the Child." Martha Weber - "Idea Shop." "Ways in Remedial Reading," with Bonnie Robinson and Janet Schmupp.

Morrow County - "Share a Book, Make a Book Mark."

McKinley County - Mr. Baron Robinson, area representative for *Cleveland Plain Dealer's* "Living Textbook Program."

Mercer County - "Parent Teacher Communications". Janet Mershimer, Houghton Mifflin Consultant.

Muskingum County - Area Workshop, a joint conference with Ohio Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts.

Richland - Ashland - Hershey Counties - Margaret Trent, Right to Read State Department of Education. Second Meeting. "Writing into Reading" Workshop.

Trumbull - Dr. Jean Kelty, Youngstown University, topic: "Yesterday, Today - Tomorrow." "Young Authors program K-12" with Judy Cernava, Norton City Schools.*

Wayne County - Dr. Carl Rosen spoke on "Parents and Reading."

West Shore - Dr. Jerry Mallett, Findley College, "Motivating Children to Read through Humor."

Hamilton County, Dr. Eileen Tway, Miami University.

West Shore, Mrs. Jackie Day - "The Big R: Reinforcing Reading Skills." Mrs. Ruth Ann Plate - "Challenging the Academically Gifted." Dr. Mary Boehnlein - "The Effects of Television on Children's Learning."

(*EDITOR'S NOTE: See explanation of *Ohio Young Authors* by Rosalyn Dowling elsewhere in this issue.)

TO LOOK AHEAD

February 11 - **Allen County**, Lloyd Harneshflager, Putnam County Middle School Supervisor speaking on "Listening Activities in the Classroom." **Appalachian** hosts the Fifth Annual Ohio University Helen M. Robinson luncheon at the Spring Conference.

February 12 - **Heritage** 6:30 dinner meeting, Roger Allen, Professor at Parkersburg Community College speaker following the Movie - "Future Shock."

February 28 - **Toledo** - Meeting scheduled for discussion on "Reading in the Content Areas for Secondary Teachers."

February 28 - **Defiance**, Dr. Thomas Cable optometrist to discuss "Reading and Vision."

February 28 - **Wayne County**, Dr. Larry Stewart, Wooster College, "Childhood and Adolescent Literature."

February 28 - **Akron**, Dr. Harry Forgan, Miami University presenting "Some Negative and Positive Thoughts on Reading in School."

MARCH

March 3-7 - **Euclid** provides a Cooperative program planned with the Right to Read Committee with "In School Activities."

March 10 - **Lake Geauga** Speaker Nancie Adams, "Enriching the Reading Curriculum for the Exceptionally Bright."

March 10 - **Mansfield Hershey**, Workshop: "Reading in the Content Area for Elementary and Secondary Teachers."

March 11 - **Mercer**, Dr. Robert Hillerich speaker. Topic: "How to Raise Bookworms."

March 12 - **Chillicothe**, "Modeling Roles in Literature." Speaker: Lona Pierson, Montgomery County Vocational School.

March 13 - **Kent State**, "Children's Literature from Great Britain." Speaker: Emily Hoover, K.S.U. Stark County Branch, Northeast Ohio Medical Center.

March 15 - **Shawnee**, Spring Conference at Shawnee State Park. Barbara Robinson author, to be key note speaker.

March 17 - **Martha Weber** - "Reading Enrichment for the Gifted Child."

March 18 - **Hamilton County**, Ideas and Materials Exchange at Elementary School, Media Center.

March 20 - **Mary Austin** - Doctor Mary Bigler, Eastern Michigan University speaker, "Reading and Language Arts."

March 20 - **Euclid** - Something very special. Dr. Roger Farr, President, International Reading Association to be guest speaker!!

NOTICE TO READERS

The **Ohio Reading Teacher** does welcome manuscripts, materials to be reviewed, or any other potential content. Short articles (3 to 5 double-spaced, typed pages) that speak to classroom teacher and/or teachers have the best chance for being printed. Send your articles to the EDITOR or any CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, all of whose addresses are printed on page 1.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR AND WRITER:
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Fiddling With Fancy Words
(Books for Vocabulary Building)

from: Fiddle with a Riddle.[9]

Groping for a gizmo that will add excitement to your word study learning center?

Wondering if whosit might have some intriguing ideas for teaching vocabulary?

Wishing you had a really unique thingamajig to inspire more expressive language?

If so, trade books are the answer! Vocabulary enrichment activities can be enlivened by using books written for entertainment, but lending themselves to language arts lessons. The *Whatamacallit Book* by Hunt,[11] which inspired the above questions, could be a model for building precision in vocabulary. Sections of the book classify words into nouns that can be worn, nouns that are around the house, etc. Middle grade students could add to Hunt's existing categories or classify other precise words into different groupings such as "Whathaveyous at school" or "Hickeymadoodles for a camping trip."

Quips and Quirks by Watson categorizes names that people use to point out the idiosyncrasies of others.[18] Even a *chatterbox* would enjoy reading the collection of specialized terms for name-calling. Skills of footnoting and the use of specialized dictionaries could be spin-offs for grades 4-7 from this book.

An example of an interesting specialized dictionary is the *Illustrated Skating Dictionary for Young People* by Van Steenwyk.[17] Its well-explained definitions and humorous drawings of ice-skating, roller skating, and skateboarding are features worthy of adapting if intermediate grade students are inspired to compile their own dictionaries on specific topics like sports or music or television.

Classifying is a skill promoted in Daly's *Nature Words*.[4] This book with its handsomely drawn illustrations groups words related to certain plant and animal species, such as lizards and snakes, then explains characteristics of each group. This book could be used effectively to integrate science and vocabulary skills at the intermediate grade level.

Two series of books are especially intriguing for primary grades. Joan Hanson's small square-shaped books humorously contrast pairs of words. Three titles—*Homonyms*,[7] *More Synonyms*,[8] and *Still More Antonyms*[9]—suggest the range of books. *The Opposites* series—*Opposites: Fast and Slow*;[13] *Opposites: Noisy and Quiet*[14]—have realistically detailed pictures illustrating related opposite scenes. One example in *Fast and Slow* illustrates slow by showing two cars impatiently following a huge tractortrailer up a hill while the opposite page shows both cars passing the rig going downhill, complete with turn signals flashing. Children could discuss the related actions, feelings, and thoughts that occur in the opposite situations.

Riddles sometimes call for creative thinking or outlandish connections. Not everyone agrees that riddles and jokes are related to vocabulary development, especially after the fifth elephant joke in one morning, but riddles are often based on homonyms, compound words, and unusual perceptions. When this is the case, children can categorize the basis of the riddle and try making some original ones based on those categories. Bernstein guides the riddle writing process in *Fiddle with a Riddle*.[3] Several humorous and handsome books of word play include *Daffynitions* by Keller which uses real words and silly definitions, such as "illegal: a sick bird."[12] Basil's *Nailheads and Potato Eyes* compares words that are body parts but also used for non-living objects, as in the title.[2] Doty's *King Midas Has a Gilt Complex!* has marvelous word plays as in "What kind of rocks all look alike? Xerox!"[5]

A brief section in *Chin Music* by Schwartz suggests several great ideas for coining new words.[15] For example, sounds could be combined and the new word could be given a definition, as in "Ziptrip - a quick vacation." The main part of the book includes intriguing words from regional American speech.

Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book by Feelings offers a unique format for learning foreign words.[6] Each word is written phonetically and given a definition and illustration. Children might try creating brief stories using some of the new vocabulary.

Children who are familiar with stories that are retold in another language will be intrigued by the new texts and make attempts to translate the story if only through the pictures. Steig's *Silvestre y la Piedrita Mágica* is an example of a translated book with pictures that encourage reading attempts.[16]

The beautifully phrased *When the Sky Is Like Lace* by Horwitz invites children to create their own lovely sounding mood words, such as the author's choice *bimulous*, or to build flowing phrases, such as *plum-purple shadows*.[10] Children would enjoy making lists of

"beautiful words," "harsh words," etc. This book and its well-chosen vocabulary would inspire mood setting words.

Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs by Barrett is a fun-filled fantasy mixing weather phenomena with food vocabulary.[1] After laughing through the book's presentation one class enjoyed composing stories in small groups using one phenomenon with a totally unrelated vocabulary. One group had a gardening story with a mathematics' vocabulary. Another group retained the weather theme of the story but created a new menu! Experiences such as this encourage imaginative thinking and much vocabulary stimulation.

Trade books offer a wealth of ideas that allow learning to be exciting for children and enable teaching to become an intriguing art for teachers. Here's a challenge drawn from some of these books: Don't be a sobersides,[18] go to the library and stock up on howdyacallit[11] books. You'll have such fun with your highly motivated students that you'll find yourself having a day that is perfectly bimulous![10]

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(*There are also some "Opposite" concepts books by Peter Spier, Doubleday Publishers such as *Fast-Slow, High-Low.*)

SPECIALS' SECTION

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Ohio Young Authors

The Ohio Young Authors is a concept appropriate for students of any age and ability levels. The framework of Young Authors' Programs include local planning, classroom activities culminating in original writing bound into student-made books, local recognition through tangible awards for each author and illustrator, and planned booksharing activities.

Young Authors' Conferences organized on a regional basis bring together student representatives from schools having participated in the local Young Authors' Program. As a requisite the representatives must have participated in a local program have written or illustrated an original manuscript, and bound the composition into a book. The Conference day agenda includes planned booksharing activities, individual certificates reflecting representation, and an adult author or illustrator as a keynote speaker. Development and participation in a regional Conference is optional.

YOUNG AUTHORS' PROGRAM

In order to initiate the program at the classroom level, plan to involve the students in creative writing. Some examples are stories, poems, tall tales and alphabet books. Editing and rewriting, planning and making illustrations, designing covers and binding the pages into a hard bound book finalize the project. Planned booksharing activities recognize the Young Authors and is an indespensable characteristic of all Young Authors' Programs.

Books may be created by one student, an author-illustrator team, or an entire class. Manuscripts may be hand printed or typed. Illustrations will vary and may include colored pencil drawings, collage, photographs, or any appropriate medium. Simple types of binding include stapling and hand or machine stitching. Cover designs should include the book title.

A class project is an advantage when initiating creative writing activities or when the time frame is short. A "This Is Your Life" book may be compiled. Each student contributes a page with a photo or drawing of him or herself. Other possibilities include poetry collections, a class anthology and ABC books.

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*The author is planning Young Authors' Leadership Training Seminars. You can contact her at the Ohio Department of Education (614) 466-2979.

As a part of the planning process teacher inservice might explore topics such as "Developing a Sequence of Literature Experiences," include Poetry Workshops, and Writing, Book Binding and Cover Design Learning Centers.

YOUNG AUTHORS' CONFERENCE

In areas of Ohio, Regional Young Authors' Conferences have been developed. Students having participated in a Young Authors' Program and authored or illustrated a book are selected on a non-competitive basis as representatives to the one day Conference.

The Conference agenda typically includes an adult author or illustrator as guest speaker, planned time to examine Young Authors' books, and may include a variety of creative experiences. A program example would be

9:14 - 10:00	Registration Examine Young Authors' Books	
10:00 - 10:15	Welcome	
10:15 - 11:15	Guest Author or Illustrator	
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch - Book Fair	
12:30 - 1:30	Activity Sessions	
	Group A Make a Shape Book	Group B Designing Book Covers
1:30 - 2:30	Rotate students and Repeat sessions	

Adaptations are recommended to this sample program. Several sessions in each time frame may be preferable to accommodate large numbers of students. Survey and tap talents of classroom teachers, art teachers and the community.

Each representative present should receive a Young Authors' Certificate. An example is

_____
(area)
YOUNG AUTHORS' CONFERENCE

_____
(student, author or illustrator)

A student in the _____ grade of _____ is awarded this (school)

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

as school representative and participant in the Young Authors' Conference at

_____

on this _____ day of _____, 19____.

_____
Conference Coordinator

LOCAL FOLLOW-UP

Upon return to the local school, opportunities should be provided for sharing of Conference experiences. A Young Authors' Recognition Day may be appropriate as a follow-up activity.

A vital ingredient of the Young Authors' Program is the opportunity to read other student-made books. A planned time within the school day may be provided. Young Authors' books may be placed in the library media center for classroom rotation and free reading periods. An open house for parents and an award's ceremony might also be planned. Building awards may be designed and presented to each author and illustrator; such as

_____
(school name)
Young Authors' Program Certificate for
Creative Effort
Awarded to

_____
(student)

for writing and/or illustrating

_____
(book title)

Awarded this ____ day of _____, 19____.

_____ _____
Principal Teacher

Young Authors in Residence may be developed. Young Authors having attended the Regional Conference may visit classrooms both within the school and across the school district on an exchange basis, sharing ideas and experiences, motivating student writing and reading, or perhaps aiding in book binding or cover design learning centers.

Having written, illustrated and bound their own books, the authors may work with the school librarian to card catalog his or her own book into the library system. (Duplicate books may be made in order that each Young Author may keep a copy.) Library circulation (peer reading choices) may provide the basis for selection of Young Authors' Conference representatives.

A more detailed description of the complementary role of library media center specialists in Young Authors' programs may be found elsewhere in professional literature[1].

Participation in Young Authors' Programs and Conferences has expanded rapidly. More than twenty large Conferences took place this spring across the state. Teachers and administrators share the student authors' enthusiasm frequently reporting intent to hold a Young Authors' Conference as an annual event.

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A "CHALLENGE" ARTICLE

WRITER: SUSAN J. DANIELS
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"...But Are They Reading?"

"Do page 38 in your workbook."
"What does 'short a' say?"
"Yes, you can play Sight Word Bingo."
"Divide the word, 'hippopotamus', into syllables."

A teacher delegates an abundance of the above classroom tasks to students during reading classes. But are they reading? Are the children actually reading during these classes? Do the students have opportunities to read sentences, paragraphs and stories; and, thereby, apply the skills they practice with games and other reinforcement activities?

These questions are serious ones and should be contemplated by all teachers of reading. Too often students know enough phonics skills to complete their worksheets successfully and win all kinds of reading games, but still cannot **read.** The act of reading has been so severely sliced into such small pieces, that an old adage unfortunately proves true: "You can't see the forest for the trees."

Several reading authorities concur. Barbe and Abbott question why educators continue to put total effort into the HOW of reading and state, "There is evidence to show we do not have a balance between learning how to read and learning the love of reading."[1] Criscuolo also agrees and cites some possible causes: (1) too much emphasis on reading skills to the detriment of reading enjoyment, (2) lack of time during the school day for students to read what they want and when they want, and (3) too much emphasis on a reading textbook, as opposed to employing a wide variety of reading materials.[2]

Further, Steuer and Murphy comment:

> "Sometimes we get so caught up in the instructional phase of reading that we forget the materials are simply a means to an end. A reading textbook is first a vehicle or springboard to the real world of books."[3]

Therefore, rather than continuing to make the reading period a time to simply practice a myriad of skills, teachers should remember the basic goal of reading classes: teaching children to **read,** not to do workbook exercises and play games.

A few suggestions to nurture children in reading include:

1. Provide TIME for students to read. Be patient, reading for many children requires an abundance of unpressured time.
2. Have available STORIES OF INTEREST for children to read. First graders with an avid interest in Lincoln have been known to suddenly read material about Ole Abe on a third and fourth-grade level.
3. Be sure children have material on their INDEPENDENT READING LEVEL. Like adults, children often shy away from frustrating activities.

4. You, as teacher, should be a MODEL of a good reader. Bring your own books to class. During a free moment, "Sneak in" a few pages. A contagious act!
5. Show an INTEREST in what children read. Give them opportunities to share what they have read with others.
6. DON'T OVERDOSE. Expecting all your children to read volumes is unrealistic. Tantalize, don't glut.
7. Make the reading period a PLEASURABLE time. Reading should not be considered a chore, but a joy.
8. Establish a PURPOSE for reading. Ask questions such as: Why are you reading this? What will you find out?
9. Stress the IMPORTANCE of reading. Many professionals agree that reading is necessary for survival and success in life.
10. Build the SELF-CONCEPT of a child. Children need to deeply believe in the statement, "Yes, I can read."

There are many more suggestions! Teachers are an imaginative, concerned lot who, unfortunately, become blinded in a fog of "cute" reading games and exercises. Hopefully, they will make their reading periods more successful by contemplating the question . . . "But are they reading?"

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Reading and Study Skills Peer Training

An educational presumption is that inservice will initiate positive change. Too often times "inservice" is directed at, or thought in terms of, creating teacher change. If inservice training is a device for initiating behavioral/educational change in the participants, wouldn't it be nice to take this premise and give it to our students. Why not encourage them to become participants in an inservice program?

A teacher-led inservice program in the area of Peer Assistance may be a beneficial aspect to your classroom or building procedure. How many times have students shared ideas with one another? How many times have they asked each other for help before they would ask you? How many times have they offered peer assistance before you had the time to get to the student in need? I'm sure this happens and

will continue to happen, but why not harness this "helping need" and put it to use in a broader sense.

This article will attempt to offer a guideline/example of a Peer Training Module in the area of Reading and Study Skills. Granted this may be a very broad topic, but it is very adaptable to most grade levels. The purpose of a P.T.M. is for you to provide an in-house core of peer helpers. A Peer Training Module is dichotomous in nature. First, it will attempt to provide the trainee with knowledgeable content and, secondly, perhaps by providing the content, it may upgrade the skills of the trainer.

The major difficulty in using the term "inservice" is that most teachers, like yourself, have usually had poor experiences with inservice. "The reason inservice tends to be dull or useless is that often the sessions are poorly timed, too general, or too specifically devoted to administrative housekeeping."[1] It is essential you construct a good inservice design for your students which will not be poorly timed, too general, or administrative in nature.

The Chart presents a view of a module design which is used in the training of college students. This design, when adapted to your present grade level, may facilitate very similar results. It is intended to encourage students to **listen**; to **think**; to **organize**; to **do**; and, hopefully, to **learn**. The input stage of the module is encouraged to be a relatively brief but meaningful procedure for students.

In the module for college students, it is suggested a 45-60 minute input session be given to the prospective peer helper, but a much shorter time for younger pupils. The reinforcement activities may be in the form of a self-analysis or the use of materials which may be incorporated in a laboratory or center setting or contained within your own classroom. It may also include student-to-student contact (shown in the module design as a show-and-tell time) where students actually do something based upon the content that was presented in the input session.

As in most structured classes or training sessions, a category is left open for the creativity of the student. Though the term "other" may not label this category with an educational pearl, it does provide the student with the option of preparing papers, handouts, slide shows, etc.

After the student has participated in the reinforcement activities, then the evaluation of the activity becomes crucial in that it is some type of an assessment of the student's ability to **listen, think, organize,** and **do**.

Once the evaluation by the module leader is provided, individual feedback is very necessary to insure that the student does have the opportunity to learn, not only based upon weaknesses but upon strengths.

The module design will provide for more individual contact with your students while providing a creativity opportunity, and insuring that the students begin to think and organize material on their own. Not only will this play an important part in their own educational

development, but more so perhaps in the students with whom they may be working. A representative list of topics may include:

Topic 1: How to Read Faster and Better
Topic 2: How to Use Your Time More Effectively
Topic 3: Methods for Better Study
Topic 4: How to Take Notes
Topic 5: How to Study for Exams/Tests
Topic 6: How to Take Exams/Tests

The above topics are used with college students, but, once again, each of the above skills could easily be adapted to your student needs. Not only could they be adaptive, but they are essential skills for educational survival. Effective knowledge of study skills is usually assumed and very seldom is it taught. Why not initiate such a program?

Using such a program may also be beneficial to the entire school in which you are now working. It may involve using students from various grade levels working together at certain periods of the day with other students. It may involve most grade levels where you feel peers may cooperate and work together.

Though the suggestions listed above are very general, it is evident that a PTM design may be encompassed into most grade levels in that it not only provides structure and learning for the student, it also, once designed, creates a fairly structured atmosphere for the teacher from which to operate.

A Reading Study Skills Peer Helper may be a great asset to your classroom or building needs. Perhaps your classroom could be enriched by having the peer helpers, but more importantly, perhaps other students may reap the benefits you have sown.*

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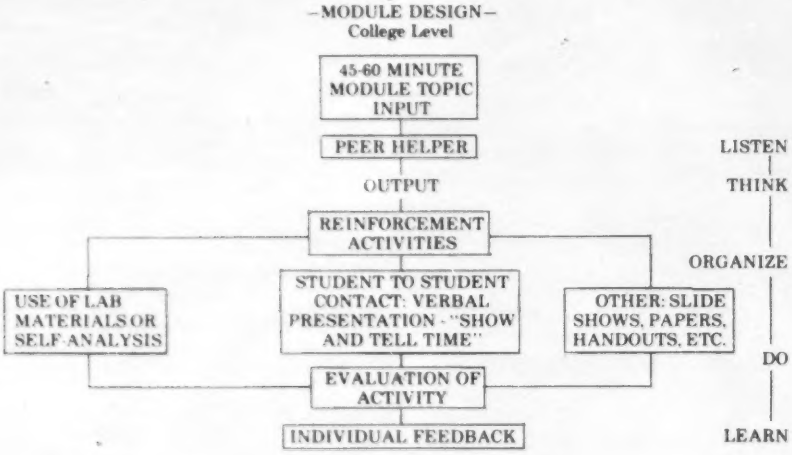

*To receive a copy of a Reading and Study Skills Peer Training Module, write: the author at 222 Patton Hall, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blackburg, Virginia 24061.

VOCATIONAL READING (Part I)

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Reading Strategies for Vocational Teachers*

The average vocational student, whether in a high school vocational program or a technical college, is reading below grade level. There are many who read far below grade level. This is the first of a series of articles designed to inform vocational teachers of the techniques which they can use to improve the reading-thinking skills of their students.

"Why me?" the vocational teacher asks. "I'm not interested in teaching reading. I'm only concerned with my subject matter." But the vocational teacher requires students to read. Whether it is construction specifications, legal procedures, or a set of complex directions, students must have some reading ability in order to comprehend the subject/matter. There are methods or techniques available to the vocational teacher which combine instruction in reading skills with subject matter understanding.

The vocational teacher, as any other subject matter teacher, cannot expect students with inadequate skills to succeed. The vocational teacher, of machine tool or welding or cosmetology, includes certain interpersonal skills in his course of study. In the same way, the vocational teacher can include reading-thinking skills. These skills are not taught in isolation; they are integrated with the course content and taught simultaneously. The teacher can show students how to use the reading tools effectively in any subject. This is the core of good teaching—showing students how to succeed.

What techniques can the vocational teacher employ to improve the reading-thinking skills of his students? The first of these is content analysis. It involves the formulation of concept statements for individual reading assignments. Content analysis is the planning stage of a lesson. For example, a teacher of custodial maintenance wrote the following behavioral objective:

> "At the end of this lesson, the student will be able to list orally seven safety rules to remember when cleaning."

It is a legitimate objective, written explicitly. But there are not implications of the reading-thinking skills involved in learning those seven safety rules. Another example is the following behavioral objective written by an electronics teacher:

> "—to explain what determines the electrical characteristics of all substances."

(*Editor's Note: Please look for more articles in future issues!)

Once again, it is impossible to tell what skills might be necessary to the understanding of these electrical characteristics.

Content analysis involves the recording of major concepts for a particular reading assignment. These state the understandings which the teacher feels are important in the reading. If the electronics teacher had written a major concept which stated:

> "It is the arrangement of electrons and protons as basic particles of electricity that determines the electrical characteristics of all substances."

much would be clarified. Not only is there a clear, concise statement of the important concept to be gained from the reading, but implications for the teaching of this concept emerge as well. The concept contains vocabulary words which are essential to its understanding (i.e. electrons, protons, electricity). It also implies a pattern of organization which can be utilized in teaching the concept.

Several ground rules must be remembered when writing major concepts. Each concept must be stated in a complete sentence. The concept should state a major understanding to be gained from reading. (What knowledge do you, the teacher, want in the student's head when he leaves this lesson?) The major concept is not stated in behavioral terms. A business teacher wrote the following major concepts for a typing class:

> "The ability to compute margins is essential for a typist. Margins vary with the kind of material being typed. A flawless paper with incorrect margins is unacceptable in the business world."

The business teacher has not only provided the major understandings to be gained from the lesson, but he has implied the necessary vocabulary and a possible pattern to follow when teaching the lesson.

Content analysis, then, is the first of a series of techniques which vocational teachers can employ in teaching reading-thinking skills along with subject matter. It involves the writing of the major understandings or concepts which the teacher feels are essential to understanding the reading assignment. Coupled with these concepts are the essential vocabulary words inherent to an understanding of each concept. If the vocational teacher would begin by including a content analysis in the planning of his lessons, the reading-thinking ability of his students will improve.